

1 September 1988

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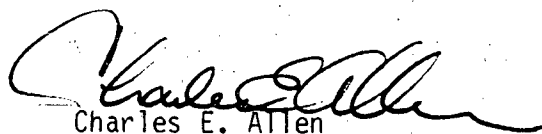
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MEMORANDUM FOR:
Executive Secretary

FROM: Charles E. Allen
National Intelligence Officer for Warning

SUBJECT: House Armed Services Committee Hearings

Attached is a memorandum that I have sent to the Chairman of the National Intelligence Council. I recognize that Congressman Aspin has asked specifically for a CIA briefing on this issue, but I find it inconceivable that the National Intelligence Officer for Warning should not be in the middle for this briefing, given the Congressionally-mandated charter and Director of Central Intelligence Directive, respectively, that assigns him the responsibility for coordination of strategic warning issues for the Intelligence Community.


Charles E. Allen

Attachments:
As stated

~~SECRET~~

1 September 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, National Intelligence Council
Vice Chairman, National Intelligence Council

FROM: Charles E. Allen
National Intelligence Officer for Warning

SUBJECT: House Armed Services Committee Hearings

1. Hearings next week before the Defense Policy Panel of the House Armed Services Committee will focus on Soviet mobilization readiness and the warning times we would likely have of a Soviet decision to mobilize. Although the Congressional letter from Congressman Aspin is addressed to CIA, this clearly is an Intelligence Community issue. The position of the National Intelligence Officer for Warning was established in 1978 in response to a Congressional charge that there must be a single focus for intelligence efforts in warning.

2. I have attached for your review the letters from the Committee to the DCI and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I am gravely concerned that these hearing could embarrass the Chairman and, much worse, set back the significant progress we have made in persuading JCS planners that intelligence can provide earlier and more reliable warning of Soviet mobilization.

3. The hearings are at a somewhat awkward time. While there is a growing consensus in the Intelligence Community that we will have earlier warning of Soviet conventional war preparations, these have not been written into a national intelligence estimate. The JCS and OSD planners are now researching new measures that utilize early warning more effectively but these studies will not be finished until late this fall. In this connection, I and the National Warning Staff will present a briefing to the Mobilization Steering Group, chaired by Craig Alderman, on 7 September at the Pentagon. Nonetheless, DOD planners still incorporate unrealistically short warning times into their plans primarily because changes in warning posture have not been reflected in a new national estimate. Moreover, the process of obtaining alternate NATO perceptions and plans on warning can take several years to accomplish. The NIO for Warning and the National Warning Staff are working on all fronts with all parties concerned, but a CIA briefing that contradicts a JCS presentation next week seems likely. At a minimum, I believe it is my responsibility to:

- a. Work with both the CIA and JCS briefers to prevent conflict.

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SUBJECT: House Armed Services Committee Hearings

b. Testify about developments in our warning doctrine and strategy that are generally accepted at the Community level.

c. Attend all the hearing sessions at which US officials testify and be available for questions.

4. I am already in close touch with the NIO/GPF on these matters and will continue to be so.



Charles E. Allen

Attachments:

House Armed Services
letters

cc: NIO/GPF

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ONE HUNDREDTH CONGRESS
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G RIM WINCUP STAFF DIRECTOR

Dear Mr. Webster:

The specific questions on which the Defense Policy Panel is seeking the Central Intelligence Agency views are:

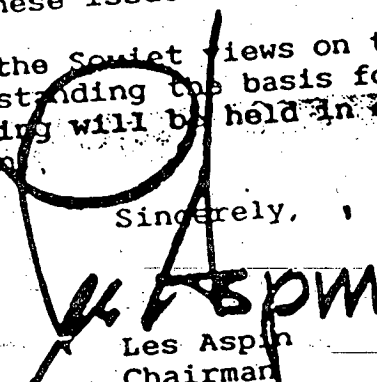
1. What is the current readiness status of Warsaw Pact forces? How would you characterize their posture? What is the defensive or offensive character of their deployment, their readiness, their manning levels, their training? How long would it take them to mobilize for an attack on NATO? What is the possibility they could attack without reinforcements from the Soviet Union?
2. What warning would we be likely to get of a Soviet deliberate and hasty mobilization. What would we see? How confident would the intelligence community be of a Soviet decision to attack? What impact would the loss of strategic surprises have on Soviet willingness to attack?
3. How do the Soviets think a war with NATO would start? Are there differences in the views of the political and military leaderships? How would you characterize Soviet grand strategy and operational strategy? What do the Soviets believe about U.S. and NATO strategy? Do they see any difference between our grand strategy and our operational strategy? How would they view a NATO decision to mobilize or to execute the Rapid Reinforcement Plan?

Mr. William H. Webster
August 24, 1988
Page two

4. What impact has General Secretary Gorbachev had on your view of these issues?

Understanding the Soviet views on these issues will greatly assist us in understanding the basis for the U.S. defense program. The hearing will be held in closed session to allow for free discussion.

Sincerely,


Les Aspin
Chairman

LA:jtd

LES ASFIN, WISCONSIN, CHAIRMAN

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3 KING WINDUP STAFF DIRECTOR

August 24, 1988

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Admiral William J. Crowe, Jr.
August 24, 1988
Page two

3. What does the Department see as the difference between the grand strategy and the operational strategy of U.S. and Soviet ground and air forces?
4. Have the recent high level U.S./Soviet defense contacts provided a basis for changing any of these assumptions?

Understanding the Department's views on these issues will greatly assist us in understanding the basis for the U.S. defense program. The hearing will be held in closed session to allow for free discussion.

Sincerely,

Les Aspin
Les Aspin
Chairman

LA:jtd